Bigelow, Poultney

April 1917

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April 2nd, 1917

Dear Mr. Bigelow:

I am just back from New York and find your kind letter awaiting me. As I was going down the Hudson the thought of you went through my mind, but I had no idea where your house was situated, and of course I was on a whizzing train. It was to me a very eventful experience to spend four days in New York while the nation was making up its mind, or rather after making up its mind was waiting for the President, and I hope that the indications of yesterday's papers are correct and that to-morrow or Wednesday will find him ready with a good strong message.

I met a great variety of people all of whom believed, though some with regret, that it is necessary for the United States to enter the war. Personally, I am exceedingly glad that you are about to take this step, for in the future we must march together and maintai in the world the kind of civilisation in which we have been brought up and which I believe in spite of all its defects is the best that the world knows. I do not for a moment imply in saying this that I would hope that we should impose our Anglo-Saxon culture upon the world. I merely want to preserve it in the world and prevent its being overwhelmed by German culture and to let it have a chance so that it may win its way on its own merits and make such progress as it may in virtue of its moral worth.

The sons of two of my friends in New York have already

volunteered for active service, and I am sure that there will be a response in the United States very much like our own, prompt and whole-hearted, from the best elements of the country; but, universal national service is the proper national ideal. There is too much waste of the best in our haphazard system.

With regard to your kind invitation for Saturday, October 6, I wish to thank you for it, but by that time we shall be deeply immersed again in the routine of university affairs, and I shall be tied down to my desk. I am sure that the Hudson will then be in all its autumn glory. I can well imagine how beautiful your home must be, and it would be a great pleasure to have the chance some time of seeing it.

I have never read your "Prussian Memories", though I have seen a great many extracts from the book, and I am sure that I shall have a great deal of entertainment from reading it, and I greatly appreciate your courtesy in sending me a copy. I noticed in New York that it had been translated into French. I congratulate you upon such a striking token of appreciation.

Will you be good enough to convey to Mrs. Bigelow our kind regards? Probably you will have seen Sir John and Lady Eaton. They are touring somewhere in the United States, I think on their way north. With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Poultney Bigelow,

Walden-on-Hudson.

President.

April 9th, 1917

Poultney Bigelow, Esq.,

Malden-on-Hudson,

N.Y.

Dear Mr. Bigelow:

This morning I have your book with its very kind inscription. I look forward with much pleasure to reading it, though I shall have to postpone that pleasure until next week, as the next few days are full of engagements. I am sure that there will be a great deal in it which will be very a propos at the present time, and the personal touch throughout will I am confident sustain one's interest to the end.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.